

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-17 (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) The medical instrument of claim 42 ~~17~~, wherein the plurality of staples are contained in a supply cartridge removably carried by the first jaw.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) The medical instrument of claim 42 ~~19~~, wherein the first jaw includes a moveable staple ejector and the second actuator includes a linearly extensible balloon engageable with the staple ejector to force the staples from the first jaw upon increase of hydraulic pressure in the balloon.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) The medical instrument of claim 33 ~~14~~, further comprising an articulation joint disposed between the end effector and the handle portion to permit articulation between the end effector and the handle portion.

24. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 23, wherein at least a portion of each of the first and second fluid flow paths are flexible.

25. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 24, wherein the first and second fluid flow paths comprise a flexible portion in proximity to the articulation joint.

26. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 23, wherein the articulation joint is adapted to permit 360° of articulation.

27. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 26, wherein the articulation joint is a ball and socket type joint.

28. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 23, wherein the articulation joint is adapted to permit lateral articulation within a plane.

29. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 28, wherein the articulation joint is a hinge type articulation joint.

30. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 23, further comprising a control wire extending between the handle portion and the articulation joint to control articulation of the articulation joint.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Currently amended) A hydraulically actuated medical instrument, comprising:

a handle portion;

an end effector carried by the handle portion;

the end effector including first and second hydraulic actuators, responsive to changes in hydraulic actuation pressure;

a first hydraulic fluid flow path and a second hydraulic fluid flow path communicating between the handle portion and the first and second hydraulic actuators, respectively; and,

the handle portion including a hydraulic cylinder block including first and second cylinders communicating, respectively, with the first and second flow paths, and first and second

pistons slidably movable with respect to the first and second cylinders, respectively;

first and second members movably mounted and engageable, respectively, with the first and second pistons for moving the pistons relative to the cylinders to change the pressure of hydraulic fluid in the flow paths ~~The medical instrument of claim 14, wherein~~ the first piston comprises a plurality of gear teeth, and the first engageable member includes a plurality of gear teeth engageable with the gear teeth of the first piston.

34. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 33, wherein the first engageable member is biased to a position of lower hydraulic pressure.

35. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 34, wherein the handle portion further comprises a release tab operable to engage the first engageable member to hold it in an increased pressure state.

36. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 33, wherein the end effector includes first and second relatively movable jaws.

37. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 36, wherein the first engageable member is adapted to move the first and second jaws toward and away from one another.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Cancelled)

40. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim

33, wherein the second piston further comprises a plurality of gear teeth and the second engageable member includes a plurality of gear teeth engageable with the gear teeth of the second piston.

41. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 40, wherein the handle portion further comprises a safety latch engageable with the second engageable member to hold the second engageable member in a lower pressure position.

42. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 40, wherein the end effector includes a first jaw, a second jaw, a plurality of staples carried by the first jaw and a staple anvil carried by the second jaw.

43. (Previously presented) The medical instrument of claim 42, wherein the second engageable member is adapted to force the staples from the first jaw and against the anvil of the second jaw.

44. (Currently amended) The medical instrument of claim ~~44~~ 33, wherein:

the first engageable member includes a moveable lever pivotally mounted and engageable with the first piston for moving the first piston relative to the cylinder block to increase the pressure of the hydraulic fluid in the first fluid flow path;
and,

the second engageable member includes a trigger pivotally mounted and engageable with the second piston for moving the

second piston relative to the cylinder block to increase the pressure of the hydraulic fluid in the second fluid flow path.

45. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 44, wherein the first and second pistons each further comprise a plurality of gears engageable with the lever and trigger, respectively.

46. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 44, wherein the lever is biased to a position in which the first fluid flow path is at a reduced hydraulic pressure state.

47. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 44, wherein the handle portion further comprises a release tab operable to engage the lever when it is in an increased pressure state.

48. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 44, wherein the handle portion further comprises a safety latch engageable with the trigger to hold the trigger in a reduced pressure position.

49. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 44, wherein the end effector includes first and second relatively movable jaws.

50. (Currently Amended) The medical instrument of claim ~~50~~ 44, wherein the lever is adapted to move the first and second jaws toward and away from one another.

51. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 44, wherein the end effector includes a plurality of staples carried by the first jaw and a staple anvil carried by the second jaw.

52. (Original) The medical instrument of claim 51, wherein

the trigger is adapted to force the staples from the first jaw and against the anvil of the second jaw.

Claims 53 - 66 (Cancelled)

67. (Previously presented) A hydraulic actuation handle for a hydraulically actuated medical instrument, comprising

first and second fluid flow paths;

first and second hydraulic pressure sources

communicating with the first and second fluid flow paths, respectively, for changing the hydraulic pressure within each of the first and second flow paths, the first and second pressure sources comprising a hydraulic cylinder block including first and second cylinders communicating, respectively, with the first and second fluid flow paths and first and second pistons slidably movable with respect to the first and second cylinders, respectively;

means for selectively actuating said first or second hydraulic pressure sources by moving one or more of the pistons; and

wherein at least one of the first and second pistons further comprises a plurality of gear teeth and the means for selectively actuating includes a plurality of gear teeth engageable with the gear teeth of the piston.

Claims 68-79 (Cancelled)

80. (Previously presented) The handle of claim 67, wherein the means for selectively actuating is biased to a position of

lower hydraulic pressure.

81. (Cancelled)